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RAMÓN DE LA CRUZ'S DEBT TO MOLIERE

(A paper read at the Fourth Annual Meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish, December 31, 1920, Chicago.)

That Molière enjoyed wide popularity in eighteenth-century Spain is a generally understood fact. The name of Moratín, the younger, is closely associated in men's minds with this popularity, and is indeed the one name called up when Molière's vogue in Spain is mentioned. Was he the originator of the Molière cult in Spain, or did he but follow in others' footsteps? If the latter, who were his predecessors as translators of Molière?

The answers to these questions are to be found in *Los Traductores Castellanos de Molière*,¹ by Cotarelo y Mori. The confused way in which the material is treated forces the reader to perform a large amount of collating in order to obtain a clear idea of the subject treated. The only conclusions which can be reached without any difficulty are that Moratín is only one of a large number of translators of Molière and that he himself is a nineteenth-century and not an eighteenth-century translator, his two translations appearing in 1812 and 1814, respectively.

The first of Moratín's predecessors is anonymous. In 1680 a shortened adaptation of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* in the form of a sainete was presented in Madrid. This is the only translation made in the seventeenth century. Seventy-two years elapsed before the next appeared. In 1752, Iparraguirre wrote a literal translation of *Le Malade Imaginaire*, produced in that same year. The following year a translation of *L'Avare* by the same author was presented. Here occurs another gap, but of only fourteen years. With 1767

¹ Cf. "Estudios de Historia Literaria de España," Madrid, 1900, v. 1, pp. 291-362.

began a veritable flood of translations and adaptations. From 1767 to 1777 fifteen appeared, seven more being produced between 1777 and 1797. With the addition of two others of unknown date, the total of eighteenth-century translations mounts to twenty-six.

The following table will show which plays were chosen for translation and which of these were the favorites:

Name of play	Translations	Dates
<i>L'Amour Médecin</i>	5	1768, 1770, 1770, after 1770, 1797
<i>L'Avare</i>	4	1753, 1770, 1780, 1796
<i>Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme</i>	2	18th C. before 1775, 18th C. after 1770.
<i>Le Dépit Amoureux</i>	1	1768
<i>L'Ecole des Maris</i>	1	1780
<i>Les Facheux</i>	1	1775
<i>Les Fourberies de Scapin</i>	1	1776
<i>Le Malade Imaginaire</i>	3	1752, 1768-70, 1774
<i>Le Mariage Forcé</i>	3	1767, 1785, 1795
<i>Le Misanthrope</i>	1	1771
<i>Georges Dandin</i>	1	1769
<i>Porceaugnac</i>	1	Before 1777
<i>Les Précieuses Ridicules</i>	1	1767
<i>Tartufe</i>	1	1779

Not all these translations are literal nor are all directly from the French. One of the four of *L'Avare* and two of the five translations of *L'Amour Médecin* are based on the Italian of Goldoni. Still another version of *L'Amour Médecin* comes via the Italian, though not based on Goldoni. Of the other twenty-two, eight are literal translations, even going to the extent in some cases of keeping the names of the characters intact. Seven others are much shortened adaptations.

There is as great a diversity of authors as there is of plays. Four translations are anonymous. Seven authors made only one translation, four others made two and one made seven. Of this numerous company only four are of sufficient importance to receive mention at the hands of Fitzmaurice-Kelly: Comella, Iriarte, Trigueros, and Ramón de la Cruz. Trigueros is mentioned merely and only as an adaptor of Lope's plays. He made the only translation of *Le Tartufe* attempted in the eighteenth century, for, since his play was at once placed on the Index, his fate probably warned off others. Comella translated *L'Avare* and *L'Amour Médecin*; Iriarte, *Le Dépit Amoureux* and *Le Malade Imaginaire*; Cruz made the seven short adaptations mentioned above.

Curiously enough the writer who did more to popularize Molière in eighteenth-century Spain than any three others, is comparatively unknown. Most people have merely heard his name, scarcely anyone has read his plays, and this in spite of his being, according to Fitzmaurice-Kelly, the national dramatist of his day. Ramón de la Cruz deserves better treatment for three reasons. He was the foremost translator of Molière of his century; he was Spain's most popular dramatist; and he evolved a new dramatic genre—the *sainete*, a one-act play given either as a curtain-raiser or between the acts of a longer play. In his *sainetes* Cruz gives vivid sketches of all phases of Madrid life with a scrupulous regard to local color that makes his playlets of more value in determining Spanish life of the second half of the eighteenth century than any historical documents possessed today. Cruz produced voluminously: four hundred and seventy-five *sainetes* and seventy longer plays, twenty-five of the latter and eight of the former being translations or adaptations. Beginning in 1757 for thirty years Cruz produced continuously, his plays and his alone packing the Madrid theatres, while the works of his more pretentious rivals failed utterly to win popular approval.

Fitzmaurice-Kelly says of him: "Après avoir débuté par les imitations et des traductions du français et de l'italien, il se tourna vers la vie madrilène, qu'il dépeignit spirituellement en de courtes pièces appelées *sainetes* . . ." It is interesting to compare with this what the editor of the latest edition of Cruz's plays has to say in his introduction.² "Entre los dubitantes ensayos de 1761 y los *sainetes* de 1763 como *La Petimetra en el Tocador*, *El refunfuñador*, *La Critica*, *El Tío Felipe* y otros hay una gran distancia. En éstos se ve ya la seguridad y confianza del maestro; el género ha ilegado a su perfección, y en adelante ya sólo la novedad del asunto constituirá la diferencia. Es la comedia social, la de costumbres, la moral, el drama a veces, todo ello condensado y reducido a su unidad más simple." But Cruz's first translation is from the Italian, and it appeared in October, 1765, while two years elapsed before, in 1767, he turned his attention to the French field. If the Spaniard is right in declaring that he had reached full maturity in 1763, his early translations can not be considered as *débutante* efforts. Furthermore, by 1765 he had produced more than forty-five *sainetes*, among them one of which Fitzmaurice-Kelly himself says: "Nos sommes

² "Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles," v. 23. *Sainetes de D. Ramón de la Cruz*, v. 1. Introd. p. 9.

mieux renseignés sur la vie de l'Espagne par *El prado por la noche* (1765), et *Las Tertulias de Madrid* (1770) que par un monceau de chroniques sérieuses." Also the majority of these forty-five saines are on Madrid life.

The additional information contained in this new edition of Cruz's plays, accompanied as it is by a complete introduction containing a list of all his plays with dates of production, shows Fitzmaurice-Kelly to have been not quite justified in his assumption. Cruz did not begin by translations. He was already well launched and in a fair way to being famous when he turned his attention to foreign fields. What motive had he for so doing at that particular time—the autumn of 1765? A glance at the situation at court shows the reason and supplies the motive. The Spanish Bourbons had always been particularly favorable to French influences, aping French fashions in literature as in everything else. Their prime ministers, however, had not always shown themselves as favorable. They had not opposed the tendency, but their support of it was due to its being the politic thing to do, not to their having any real enthusiasm for it. But in the autumn of 1765, the Conde de Aranda became the leading figure at the Spanish court; his appointment as prime minister followed early in 1766. Aranda was a great patron of letters and one of the most francophile men of his day. He held his part until 1774, and his influence continued to be felt for three years more. On the drama of his day this influence is particularly evident. Not only may the production of fourteen translations from Molière in the ten years from 1766 to 1776 be attributed to his influence, but he turned Cruz from the writing of saines on Madrid life alone to the translating and adapting of many plays and saines from the Italian and the French, including among the latter seven from Molière. Cruz, as well as the other translators from Molière, saw a chance to gain court favor by this device. Of the others history says nothing. Cruz, however, succeeded in his purpose. The others were unknown prior to their incursion into the field of translating. That Cruz should have succeeded is strong presumptive evidence that he had already won a name for himself.

This paper is not concerned with his longer translations from the French and the Italian. All his adaptations from Molière are in the form of saines. All were probably written before 1777, six certainly are prior to that date. The list comprises:

Las Preciosas Ridículas	Les Précieuses Ridicules	1767
El Casado por fuerza	Le Mariage Forcé	1767
El Mal de la Niña	L'Amour Médecin	1768
El Casamiento Desigual	Georges Dandin	1769
Los Fastidiosos	Les Facheux	1775
Pourceaugnac ³	Pourceaugnac	Before 1777
El Plebeyo Noble ⁴	Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme.....	

Of these seven plays, four alone are accessible to the American reader: *Las Preciosas Ridículas*, *El Mal de la Niña*, *El Casamiento Desigual*, and *Los Fastidiosos*. The first two have been published in the first volume of the edition of the Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, the last two appeared in the collection of Cruz's sainetes, published by Agustín Duran in 1843.⁵ None are found in Cruz's own edition. Of the three others *El Plebeyo Noble* is found only in the book published in Segovia, 1820, and will not be included in the new edition now appearing; *El Casado por Fuerza* has been published by itself three times,⁶ but will not be included in the new edition; and *Pourceaugnac* is known only by title.

In the four plays accessible to the American reader, Cruz's methods of adaptation can readily be studied. Cruz had many difficulties to contend with, chief among which was the time prescribed for the action of the sainete, his chosen literary form. It was not easy to decide what to omit in order to reduce a comedy of Molière's to the twenty-five minutes allowed for the sainete. Nor was this all. Cruz was compelled to make many small changes in order to bring his seventeenth-century original up to date. Nor was his audience the

³ "Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles," v. 23, Introd. p. 66. Note to *Pourceaugnac*: "Translation of this comedy of Molière which Don Ramón de la Cruz made in the form of a sainete, according to the assertion of Sr. Pedro Nápoli Signorelli in his *Historia crítica de los Teatros*, edition of Naples, 1777, p. 416."

⁴ *Id.*, p. 66. Note to *El Plebeyo Noble*: "The book called *Colección de Sainetes sacados de varias comedias de J. B. de Molière*, Segovia, 1820, contains *El Casamiento Desigual*, *Las Preciosas Ridículas*, *El Mal de la Niña*, *El Plebeyo Noble*, and *El Casado por Fuerza*. All except the one used as title here are known to be Cruz's. It would not be rash, therefore, to suppose that it also is his. It clearly seems to be a translation of *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* of the said Molière." (Cf. *Los Traductores Castellanos de Molière*, pp. 299-300. where Cotarelo y Mori affirms this play to be by Cruz.)

⁵ "Colección de Sainetes de D. Ramón de la Cruz," Duran, 2, Vs, Madrid, 1843.

⁶ Madrid, 1791; Valencia, 1814; Madrid, 1814.

counterpart of the brilliant society of Louis XIV's court. Consequently, Cruz had to force the comedy note, broaden the humor, make the hits more obvious in order to assure Molière's humor getting across the footlights. Finally Cruz had to contend on the one hand with certain innate prejudices on the part of his Spanish audience and on the other with the Holy Inquisition, which took its duties as censor of public morals seriously.

His manner of adaptation differs markedly in the four plays. In two of them, *Las Preciosas Ridículas* and *El Mal de la Niña*, he adheres closely to his original, while in the other two, *El Casamiento Desigual* and *Los Fastidiosos*, he suppresses much and adds much not found in his original. It seems clearer, therefore, to separate the discussion into two heads.

I. LAS PRECIOSAS RIDÍCULAS, EL MAL DE LA NIÑA

(a) *Las Preciosas Ridículas*¹ — *Les Précieuses Ridicules*

This one of all Molière's plays offered least difficulties to Cruz. A short one-act play itself, Cruz could keep all the essentials of the action practically intact and still keep within his prescribed time limit. The few changes needed to bring the play up to date shortened it sufficiently. Thus, sedan chairs and impromptus were unfamiliar to an eighteenth-century Spanish audience. Their omission does away with two scenes. So also in the case of "La Carte de Tendre," Cruz leaves out Cathos's lengthy dissertation, substituting for it a simple "cartas amatorias." "Cyrus" and "Mandan," "Aronce" and "Clélie," so familiar to Molière's public and to ardent readers of Mlle. de Scudéry's novels, become "Eneas" and "Dido." The French dance, "la courante," gives place to the "minué double,"

¹ The essential facts of *Les Précieuses Ridicules* are: Two country girls, newly come to Paris—Cathos and Madelon—receive as callers the two gentlemen they are to marry. Infected as they are by the Précieux doctrine, with its meticulous care in dress and speech, and its rigid code in matters of courtship (founded on Mlle. de Scudéry's "Carte de Tendre," found in *Clélie*) they carry it to ridiculous lengths. They flout their visitors, who leave vowing vengeance. In accordance with this vow they dress their two valets, Mascarille and Jodelet, like gentlemen and send them to call on the girls. The latter are charmed. The two valets outdo the girls in preciosity. In the midst of their enjoyment, the masters come in, strip the valets of their clothes, expose the trick, break off the match, and leave the girls discomfited and their guardian furious at their folly, which has disrupted two good matches.

the latest in 1767, French also. Greatest of all is the change of Cathos's speech when she describes the dress of the suitors.⁸

In two instances Cruz forces the comedy note. He keeps the exact phrase of the French when Madelon asks the servant for the mirror, giving the title "le conseiller des graces" and the servant replies that she doesn't know what animal is wanted. To this Cruz adds the return of the servant with the mirror (not found in Molière and has her say: "Aquí está el animalito." Similarly, in the case of Jodelet's wound, which in the French is inflicted by a grenade, leaving a large scar, the Spanish has Jodelet's leg, shot off by the grenade, recognized as his general's leg by a soldier, brought back to Jodelet by the soldier, and fastened on again by the two of them.

In the middle of Mascarille's scene with the two girls, Cruz apparently fears that the audience may forget that a joke is being played on the girls. To leave no doubt that such is the case, he interjects an aside for Mascarille to say, conveying unmistakably to the audience that Mascarille is not what he seems.

Yet the sum of all these changes makes but a small total. Cruz's play is essentially the same as his original; in fact, almost all of it is a direct and literal translation of the French play.

(b) *El Mal de la Niña*⁹ — *L'Amour Médecin*

⁸ *Les Précieuses Ridicules*, scene IV: "... une jambe unie, un chapeau désarmé du plumet, une tête irrégulière en cheveux, et un habit qui souffre d'une indigence de rubans ... leur sabots ne sont pas de bonne faiseuse, et qu'il s'en faut d'un grand demi-pied que leurs hauts-de-chausses se soient assez larges"

Las Preciosas Ridículas, p. 409: "... con unos vestidos como unas batas, sin bordado ni galones, el sombrero sin cucarda, sin punto de Inglaterra las camisas, una capa sola, no más de dos sellos en el reloj, una espada sin vaina verde, un calzón sin charreteras doradas, y sin ocho o diez botones a la boquilla."

⁹ *L'Amour Médecin*: Lucinde, only daughter of Sganarelle, a rich miser, is sick with love for Clitandre, who returns her love. Her father refuses consent. Prompted by her maid, Lucinde feigns a desperate illness. Four doctors are called in. Before diagnosing the case, they consult alone—not on the case, but on horses, mules, and the dignity of the profession. Then two, questioned by Sganarelle, disagree violently on whether the patient shall be bled or not, the other two agreeing that nothing should be done. Sganarelle, in despair, buys a patent medicine of the day, then much in vogue. The doctors who disagreed are reconciled by a third. Clitandre, through the connivance of Lucinde's maid, presents himself, disguised as a doctor, and operates a speedy cure, tricking Sganarelle into consenting to their marriage, while pretending to trick Lucinde into getting well by arranging a faked marriage.

Cruz's main changes are prompted by the need of reducing the length of the play. He kept Act I intact (up to the doctor's being called), but cut Acts II and III considerably. He suppressed the larger part of Act III by substituting after the consultation a short scene where Sganarelle rushes on to tell the doctors the patient is much worse. On hearing this, the doctors leave in a body. This permits him to omit the scene of the reconciliation of the two quarrelsome doctors. These omissions take nothing from the intrigue of the play; in fact, Cruz's play is more unified in action than Molière's. There was in the latter no apparent dramatic reason for the long scene of reconciliation, since neither doctor comes on the scene again. The chief difference resulting from this change is that whereas Molière ridicules four specific types of doctors of his day, Cruz broadens the theme to include doctors in general.

To bring his adaptation up to date, Cruz had only to change the subjects discussed by the doctors in their consultation. The Spanish doctors talk of the price of feed, of the advantage of having a coach, and of an item in the "Gaceta." Does the fact that they do not insist on the dignity of their profession indicate that the eighteenth century considered the profession more highly than the seventeenth century did?

The procedure, then, in the adaptation of this play is the same as for *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. Cruz omits more, but, where he borrows, he translates literally. He keeps the dénouement as he keeps the main lines of the intrigue. Both plays were easily adapted to the Spanish stage, containing nothing jarring either to the susceptibilities of his audience or to the Inquisition. The next group offers a distinct change from the two considered thus far.

II. EL CASAMIENTO DESIGUAL, LOS FASTIDIOSOS

(a) *El Casamiento Desigual*¹⁰ — Georges Daudin

¹⁰ *Georges Daudin*: Georges, a wealthy peasant, has married Angélique, daughter of a penniless noble. His wife despises him, her father and mother scorn him. She is idolized by her parents. Clitandre, a young noble, falls in love with Angélique. The whole play consists of Georges' almost catching the two lovers on three occasions—first, when they exchange notes through their servants; second, when they meet secretly in the house; third, when they have a midnight rendezvous in the garden. Each time the ready wit of the daughter changes the result into Georges' discomfiture. In the first act he has to apologize to both lovers, in the second to both, and in the third is

This play in the French is far longer than either of the other two, the longest, indeed, of any of the four to be considered here. Cruz had to cut a great deal. He dispensed with the whole of the second act. By having his hero refuse to apologize, he could cut the long scene of George's apology to Clitandre. Then, in deference to the Holy Inquisition, he left out the episode of the midnight rendezvous. These successive omissions left Cruz a little to spare and he was able to insert a scene of his own, that with the *alcalde*. This scene permits Cruz to end his play in a manner satisfying to his Spanish audience. A hero as abject as is Georges Daudin would not have been received with favor by Cruz's audience. The triumph of Juan's right mindedness over the cleverness of his wife is somewhat forced, but at least Cruz avoids the repetition found in Molière. In the French play, each act is a repetition of the one before. In each is recorded the discomfiture of Georges, preceded by the calling of his wife's parents and followed by his abject apology. Cruz's is at least an ending, while that of Molière is merely a stopping. The reader envisages an unending series of similar discomfitures for Georges.

(b) *Los Fastidiosos*¹¹ — *Les Facheux*

¹¹ *Les Facheux*: The action consists solely in the efforts of Eraste and his love, Orphise, to have two rendezvous together. Eraste, while waiting for Orphise, tells of a bore he met at the theatre in a long monologue. His importunate servant and an equally importunate singer delay him. An importunate caller delays Orphise. Their rendezvous is interrupted by a friend needing a second in a duel, by two friends seeking an arbiter for their

locked out of his own house in his night clothes and has to apologize besides to his wife. Each apology takes place before the parents, summoned by Georges to witness the truth of his accusations.

El Casamiento Desigual: Juan, a rich peasant, has married Josefa, daughter of a penniless noble. Despised for his low birth by his wife and her parents, he is in low spirits. His friend, the *alcalde*, encourages him to assert himself, promising his help. Josefa is courted by two gentlemen from Madrid. Juan learns of an interchange of notes, but is discomfited by his wife's wit in the presence of the two gentlemen and of her parents. He refuses, however, to apologize. Instead he scolds his wife. The two gentlemen leave, not to appear again. Josefa, at nightfall, slips off to a dance. Juan locks her out, and is lured outside himself by Josefa's pretending, as in the French play, to kill herself. He in turn is locked out. Her parents and Josefa are, however, put in the wrong by testimony of Juan's servant that Josefa was indeed gone out, and the intervention of the *alcalde*, with his sharp reproof of the three, enables the play to end in a complete triumph for Juan.

Here is another play which lent itself readily to Cruz's purpose. Though in three acts in the French, this division is purely arbitrary, and independent of the action. There is little dramatic interest in the play; it is rather a vehicle for Molière to satirize the bores of his day, and derives its only interest from what the characters say, not from the way they act. Thus the play is admirably adapted for use as a *sainete*. Cruz keeps the shadow of intrigue of the French play, barring the disapproval of the lady's guardian. Instead, however, of transplanting the French bores to Spanish soil, he keeps only the inspector of public signs and the servant. He liked the servant so well, that he doubles this rôle. His substitutions are a great improvement on his original. The three good women, always spying on their neighbors and being shocked at what they see and hear; the man with oil to sell; and, above all, the rapacious little beggar girl, are much more unusual and interesting than the various kinds of bores presented by Molière. In justice to Molière, it should be said, however, that Molière had a serious purpose in mind, while Cruz's one idea in this *sainete* was to amuse. That said, the fact remains that Cruz's is the more amusing of the two, from the very beginning where he avoids the long monologue of Molière's play by the substitution of an amusing dialogue, where a bore tells how bored he was on three separate occasions. The idea of a bore telling of other bores is Molière's, but Cruz's application of this idea is happier than was the former's.

Los Fastidiosos is, then, not so much a translation as a very free

dispute, by a man whose hunting an importunate bore spoiled. Eraste is late to a second rendezvous, owing first to his servant, next to a scholar wishing to be appointed inspector of public signs, then by a man offering wonderful schemes as a means to negotiate a small loan, finally by a friend, eager to be his second in a fictitious duel. His rescue of the guardian of Orphise, who rewards him with her hand, enables the play to end.

Los Fastidiosos: Fernando, Ana's lover, awaits news of her; a friend of his—a bore—enters, and tells him how bored he has been, first at the theatre, then in the square, finally at a lady's house. Fernando can scarcely get rid of him. He is late at the rendezvous, owing to his two importunate servants, to an uncle from the country, to three holy women, always spying on and being shocked at their neighbors—these before leaving home—then by an abbé wishing to be appointed inspector of public signs, who negotiates a small loan; Ana is detained by an importunate caller. Their conversation is interrupted by an insistent child beggar, and by an Andalusian oil vendor. One of Fernando's servants quarrels with the latter, a crowd gathers, a policeman appears. Ana suddenly resolves to marry Fernando, and the play ends happily.

adaptation of Molière's play. The basic idea, one or two episodes from the French, the rest, including a different ending, is all Cruz's. In *El Casamiento Desigual*, Cruz omitted much of the action of the French play; he changed the ending, but he added relatively little of his own. In this play, *Los Fastidiosos*, he goes further, making very considerable additions and changes. That he could on occasion be even more free with his source is shown in the two versions of his sainete, *La Crítica*. Cruz wrote the first draft of this sainete in 1762. It has just appeared in the first volume of the edition of his plays in the *Nueva Biblioteca*. There it bears the title, *La Crítica*, "primera parte"¹²—thus in the index—while in the text it stands as *La Crítica, La Señora, La Primerosa y La Linda*. What is probably a later reworking of this 1762 version was published by Duran (I, p. 274),¹³ with the title, *La Crítica*.¹⁴ There can be no doubt that the two sainetes are one and the same, for the basic idea and the second scene¹⁵ are strikingly similar. Furthermore, the principal

¹² As is often the case *La Crítica*, segunda parte, bears no relation either as regards subject or date of publication to the first part. It appeared in 1779 and seems a reworking of another sainete, *Los Cuatros Barrios*, 1770. Cf. *N. B. de A. E.*, Introd. pp. 20 and 48.

¹³ Cf. note to *La Crítica*, primera parte, *N. B. de A. E.* I, p. 62: "Durán imprimió en su colección (I, p. 274) un sainete de igual título, pero muy diferente. Parece ser refundición de éste pues conserva algunos versos y los caracteres femeninos."

¹⁴ *La Crítica*, primera parte: Four gentlemen, disdained by their ladies, resolve on suicide. To their friends' questions, they answer that each lady is bizarre in her own way: one affects archaic words and latinisms; one considers herself the most beautiful woman of all time, another believes herself of absurdly high birth; the fourth thinks herself of finer clay than others. The friends promise their aid, dissuade the lovers, and they all go off to plan a scheme to win the ladies. A brief scene shows the four ladies exhibiting each her mania. Then the four men return disguised, the one as a satyr, another as a monkey, the third as a giant, and the fourth as a dwarf. By a happy and unexplained circumstance each wins favor with his lady, who agrees to marry each her monster. They unmask, but the ladies abide by their promises.

La Crítica (reworking): Four gentlemen, disdained by their ladies, resolve on suicide; one of them suggests as a last resort that they disguise themselves as their successful rivals and try to win out by doing each his rival's eccentricity. They celebrate each his lady's charm and her bizarre quality. The ladies' discussion in the second scene, instead of having for its sole purpose to illustrate this bizarrry, now furthers the plot development by turning on a eulogy by each lady of the virtues peculiar to her favorite

men characters and all the women are identical. Cruz's borrowing from Molière's play is done cleverly. The trick, essentially, is the same, with the one difference that his masters disguise themselves, not their valets, as in *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. This is due to Cruz's desire to have his sainete end well. In the French each of the two girls—Cathos and Madelon—has the four characteristics of an involved manner of speech, and of the pretension of being of absurdly high birth, of extraordinary beauty and of finer clay than the common folk. Cruz has divided these four characteristics up among four women, giving one to each. Mascarille and Jodelet supply the comedy by outdoing the two French girls in their idiosyncrasies. In both the versions, Cruz's men do the same outdoing, though the change from the senseless buffoonery of the 1762 version to the carefully planned take-off of the foible of each lady by her particular suitor—in the reworking—makes the parallelism with the French play much more marked in the latter. As might be expected from a consideration of his methods in other plays, Cruz differs from his original in the ending and in his forcing of the comedy note. As generalizations go, it is safe to say, since the vast majority of sainetes end well—and this is especially true in Cruz's first period—that the sainete is supposed by its very nature to end well.

These two versions, taken in connection with his translation, *Las Preciosas Ridículas*, 1767—all this affords a means of approximately dating the reworking, as it must have been written after 1762

suitors. The men gain immediate success, the ladies pledging their words before masks come off.

¹⁵ The identity of lines mentioned in Note 13, occurs in this second scene. The opening speeches as each lady comes on are identical in the two versions, and even where later Cruz makes changes in their remarks, where the reworking has them discuss their suitors, he keeps all the unusual words and quaint ideas found in the 1762 version. The language of this second scene, in his first version, evidently satisfied Cruz. That the reader may judge of the absurdity:

La Señora: "Ya estarán ahora ardiendo cincuenta ("luces") en las autisalas de mi primo, don Eusebio Marqués de Zamarramala y vizconde de Hornachuelos."

La Crítica: "Ya el resplandor refulgente del arretino ardor terso que pululante ilumina con flamígeros reflejos voy adjetivando pasos hacia, el cubículo nuestro."

La Primerosa: "¡Qué ordinaria está la sala! ¡Qué antiguos son los espejos! No tienen marcos de plata; de filigrana he de hacerlos con diamantes y esmeraldas que los guarnezcan a trechos."

and prior to the translation of 1767—offer a unique example of Cruz's working out of an idea that appealed to him. It is surprising that no one has hitherto pointed out the striking resemblance existing between the three sainetes. Cotarelo y Mori¹⁶ mentions examples of his reworking a sainete, but here Cruz writes a sainete, recasts it, and then, still dissatisfied with his result, ends by translating it.

Cotarelo y Mori, in addition to enumerating the plays translated from Molière, mentions five plays where the basic idea is derived from one of the Frenchman's plays; according to him, *L'Avare* is the only one of Molière's so honored. Of these five—four sainetes and one "comedia jocosa" in one act—one is Cruz's sainete, *La Avaricia Castigada*, 1762. Cotarelo y Mori's exact words are: ". . . sin analogía directa con la obra molieresca aunque con el mismo tema por argumente . . ." If the other four do not resemble their source more closely than Cruz's sainete does—the only resemblance here being that, in both plays, there is a miser, with a daughter who is courted by a young man; in the whole intrigue and action there is no resemblance—the claim of Cotarelo y Mori has little ground to rest upon.

Despite this disproved contention, Cruz's share of the translations and adaptations from Molière in the eighteenth-century total is a large one, if not a predominating one—eight sainetes drawn from seven plays, four of which were translated only by him. The popularizing effect of translations made by a man like Cruz was vastly greater than that of a host of writers whose plays won no favor on the Spanish stage.

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¹⁶ *Ramón de la Cruz: su vida y sus obras*, Madrid, 1899.